

EDUCATION— DISASTER — NEW EDUCATION

(Background Notes and reflection on
an emerging initiative)

Cluster School Movement Series

Volume 1 :: 1987

3790

Community Health Cell
Library and Documentation Unit
BANGALORE

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CENTRE FOR NON-FORMAL & CONTINUING EDUCATION

"Ashirvad",

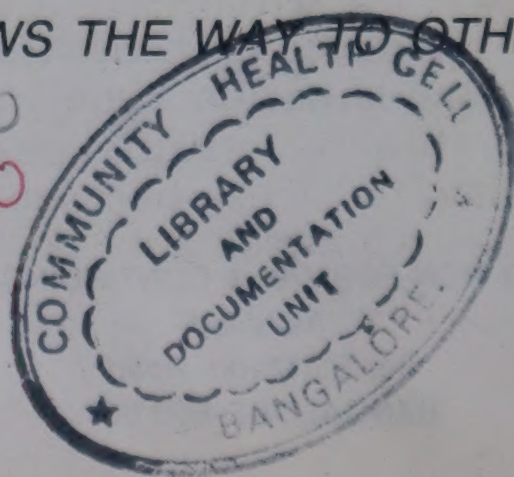
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BANGALORE-560 001.



“THE MOMENT THE SLAVE RESOLVES THAT HE WILL NO LONGER BE A SLAVE, HIS FETTERS FALL. HE FREES HIMSELF AND SHOWS THE WAY TO OTHERS.”

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FOREWORD

THIS booklet identifies that **participation** and **education** are the **two** vital, inter-related forces which together can contribute to the **developmental process** associated with equitable growth, progress and adaptation all of which involve changes in society as a whole and in parts. Participation in developmental efforts can only be effective if people, especially the **weaker sections**, possess the skills, knowledge, awareness, encouraging partners etc. The driving factor behind this is **learning in all its forms** : education, training, experience, whether formal or non-formal or informal. It is an **enabling factor** in effecting social development; it is the key to improving the general quality of life in society.

The **first Chapter** deals with the characteristics of education which can be broken into **three** subsidiary units : Who gets it ? What happens to them during it ? What happens to those who did not get it ? These enquiries embrace problems about educational opportunity, management and transmission of knowledge and values, social placement and stratification and mobility. The basic answer to this is simple : education has the characteristics it does because of the goals pursued by those who control it. The question

is then how to change this situation. The answer is again obvious and very simple : **facilitate and educate the powerless, and they will take charge of themselves.**

The **Second Chapter** is about disaster response and the way the drought situation in Karnataka is being handled. The disaster response has added importance, for it sets the tone and often defines the scope and methods used by the Government and other voluntary agencies with a problem which is basically socio-Chapter is that it is the poor who suffer most in a drought situation, and that we must address the question of **how to reduce poverty and place drought relief schemes in the context of overall development.** It also makes a few preliminary remarks on the political economy of drought and drought relief programmes.

Innovation has become a permanent feature of the educational scene. **Chapter 3**, taking its cue from earlier two Chapters, reflects in theory and in actual experience. This reflection leads to the evolution of a new framework and initiative which forms the basis for our educational activities. This enabling process visualises and contextualises :-

- a. **Development as a concept leading to better quality of life for the weaker sections;**
- b. **Participative role of the people as individuals and as groups;**
- c. **The role of education in enhancing fuller participation by people in the development process.**

Three terms are frequently used in this book : **education, development and intervention.** The term **"intervention"** is used in the medical sense

of acting in order to bring about a change in the course of the process. The purpose of intervention is to improve the circumstances of the weaker sections. It is our conviction that successful intervention can play an important part in the developmental process.

Bangalore 560 001

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M.S.Shivakumar

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Chapter 2 is a result of the collective efforts of many colleagues : BC Gopal, Nelson Aranha, SK Surendra and a well-wisher, who wish to remain anonymous.

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CHAPTER - I

WEAKER SECTIONS OF THE INDIAN SOCIETY AND THEIR EDUCATION

THIS paper explores the trends in education of the **weaker sections** of the **Indian society** so that proper priorities regarding our educational efforts may be determined and suitable strategies and programmes for bold and concerted action being thought out and fearlessly executed.

Covering the entire gamut of the educational system the Government document **Challenge of Education; A Policy Perspective** exposes with facts and figures the achievements and failures for the past 35 years at various levels of education, analyses the causes of the present impasse the educational system finds itself in, and suggests many remedies required to generate radical changes in it so that it may be able to reach out to the majority who are excluded from its ambit and equip every citizen to meet the challenges of the 21st century. While the comprehensive document recognises the economic and social constraints that can block any meaningful transfor-

mation of the educational system, it also sets before the nation the challenges of equity and coverage, content and quality, social relevance and individual interest, possible approaches and innovations, priorities and structural changes that can be met with purposeful action if we are serious about achieving an egalitarian, just and progressive society as envisaged by our Constitution.

Here a perusal of the new educational policy in the light of the Seventh Five Year Plan is interesting. The Approach to the Seventh Five Year Plan has recognised that **"the existing educational system is felt in its contents and processes to be dysfunctional to the requirements of the country, and in need of radical changes"**. The following were specifically stated as the major thrust during 1985-90:

1. Universal elementary education by 1990
2. Removal of illiteracy in the 15-35 age group
3. Qualitative improvement and reorientation of education at all stages with an effort to link it to national needs and development and
4. Modernisation of technical education.

The first two thrust-factors are quantitative and are, at least in theory, given top priority ever since the First Five Year Plan, and obviously never realised. The latter two thrusts concern the quality of education. Thus, the educational policy and Seventh Five Year Plan together bring in two major concerns of education viz. (i) access and availability and (ii) quality of education. If one follows the pronouncements of the Government, allocation of funds etc., then one notices that the Government is more inclined towards the quality of education than accessibility. The latter concerns the weaker section. This trend continues in the new policy document.



Living at the margin

The factors that impede achieving cent per cent literacy have been diagnosed well in the present document and there ends the thrust. But concentration in the frame work is on the quality of education which benefits the rich. Little is said about the access of the weaker sections. Thus, the result will in all probability be an endeavour to constitute a small, elite sub-system, legitimised by the new educational policy and the Seventh Five Year Plan in the name of quality improvement. And the Government has well responded in taking the elite to the 21st Century.

CONTRADICTION: PRONOUNCEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

The glaring discrepancy between pronouncements of planners of education and the Government regarding the eradication of illiteracy and universalisation of elementary education, and the performance of the educational system can be understood by identifying the various interest groups in society, and the processes operative therein. There is a definite trend towards which these processes have oriented the different groups and this trend is of granting increasing power to certain groups resulting in increasing deprivation and pauperisation of the others. The latter from 65 per cent of the population, especially the 48 per cent below the poverty line. These are the illiterate, malnourished and the non-service sector-be it of health, education-and no programme of income generation, employment etc., of the Government reaches them. They seem to have no rights and are called the **"masses"** or the **"weaker section"**. We hear a lot about them during the elections, in reports drawn by educational committees and commissions and in the preamble of the Five Year Plans. And yet their situation has been of continued exclusion from all the processes of growth and

development. Thus, Indian Society is divided into two compartments revolving in separate circle—one progressing and the other stagnating or better, deteriorating. The theory of **"circular, causative, cumulative effect"** propounded by Gunnar Myrdal (1968:1057) is perfectly applicable to our Indian context. One deprivation causes another and this process goes on in a circular way so that the overall effect on the group is greater deprivation. It is well nigh impossible to get out this vicious circles unless consciously new variables are introduced to break the linkage of the various factors influencing and knitting one with the other as cause to effect (de Souza 1984: 58).

What is said of the **Weaker Sections** is equally true of the powerful groups. Their initial advantage in any one or more of the sub-systems of society has helped them acquire more power and consequent benefits and privileges which in their turn generate more gains at various levels.

FAILURE OF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

To understand how this principle of **"circular, causative, cumulative effect"** works in concrete, let us examine one of the major national programmes of the 1950s—the **Community Development Programme** - and see how the effort at integral and harmonious development through participative involvement at the grassroots level worked. This programme was evolved theoretically in a **coherent** and systematic way so as to weld together all the groups into integrated communities at village, Panchayat and Block levels. Participation of all the groups in the development process was one of its prime objectives. The role of the Government bureaucracy was to be one of initiation, motivation, promotion, co-ordination and dissemination of ideas, information and other

inputs for the better functioning of communities. The outcome of this massive programme was expected to be the generation of egalitarian local communities which, by the very force of their unity, participation and growth, would be in a position of interacting at larger levels and thus forming dynamic states and a progressive nation (Government of India 1956).

And yet this gigantic national programme was declared an utter flop after a decade and it only strengthened the dual society and made the **Weaker Sections** more vulnerable to the exploitation by the stronger groups comprising of landlords, middlemen, moneylenders, politicians, village and Government officials. The reason why the programme failed was that ideas and plans which were ideal on paper did not take into consideration the social stratification consolidated by a rigid caste system at the local level, and the absence of genuine secular and human values so very necessary to form dynamic village communities. The caste-class consciousness of the Government employees with little or no motivation or understanding of the goals of the programme, and finally the politicians who used the programme to partronise the powerful of the place in order to make sure of the votes of the weak and poor, were not taken into account (Kurien 1967:80-81).

The mutual interests of the socially, economically and politically powerful got integrated into a whole. Consequently, whatever programme of the Government, be it making available health facilities to all or making the landless and poor self-reliant through programmes like **IRDP**, **NREP**, land reforms etc., its results did not reach out to the **weaker sections** for whom these were explicitly designed.

Another important negative impact of these programmes that have failed to transfer power to the weaker sections to participate in the development process of the country has been the giving up of all responsibility of the socially and economically powerful towards the weaker sections, especially the **SCs**, **STs** and those at the lower rungs of **BCs**. The powerful sections have just used the powerless for their own benefit, divided the weaker sections and rendered them impotent and voiceless. The castes have got polarised, and caste and class interests consolidated for procuring more privileges for the powerful at the cost of the powerless.

The present trend of development by strengthening the hands of the privileged section through the creation of more elite schools and modernisation of means of production and administration is based on the "**Filter theory**" or "**Trickle down theory**". Though it was successful in the developed countries, it cannot bring justice to the millions of powerless poor in the present situation of our country and the Third World. Only a direct and determined intervention to empower the powerless can give them the bargaining power with the privileged and so help them enter the mainstream of the country. The administrative, legal and law-and-order systems now geared to defend the privileges of the more powerful groups will have to be directed towards safeguarding the rights of the underprivileged.

THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS

A cursory glance at the educational process during the past 35 years will bear out what has been hitherto said about the marginalisation of the majority of our people, rendering them more and more powerless, disorganised, deprived and helpless. It has also brought about such centralisation and bureaucratisation in the educa-

tional system as to remove any participation and social responsibility at the local level in the school system. A narrow vision of society and education has even made the privileged castes and classes to accept the present situation as inevitable for the protection of their own rights and privileges.

At the dawn of independence and even much earlier, the more enlightened among our leaders were fully aware that the first task of the Government was to eradicate illiteracy, (literacy rate was 14 per cent in 1947), and universalise primary education within the shortest time possible. Even though the Constitution framers wanted this to be achieved within five years, the more pragmatic among them prevailed upon the others that this could be done by 1960. Hence the larger share of the educational budget was earmarked for Primary Education (Primary sector 43 per cent in 1950-51 and 26 per cent in 1976-77) in the first five year plan. But then in every successive Five Year Plan we witness the allocation of funds reduced for elementary education and that of Secondary-Higher Secondary Education increased. The demand for those last two sectors has increased and it is bound to increase in the future. The growth rates in middle, secondary and higher education during approximately 1951-81 were respectively 5.5, 7.8 and 9.7 per cent per annum.

Thus the higher the level of education, the greater has been the growth in enrolment. Since only the rich can afford higher education, the conclusion is obvious: '**Development**' in the field of education is such that while the rich are getting higher and better education, more and more of the poor remain illiterate. Why this phenomenon?

The forward castes and classes soon realised

that education of their children was the key to social, economic and political advancement, and right away they took advantage of the educational facilities at the elementary level. Now they realised that this alone would be insufficient to make progress and so in the successive Five Year Plans clamoured through the political clout they had, for higher levels of education as a matter of right. Hence, from the Second Five Year Plan onwards the goal of universalisation of elementary education was conveniently side-tracked in favour of education for the powerful.

PRIMARY EDUCATION

No doubt, primary schools were multiplied over the years so as to cover all panchayat villages. Yet 1.53 lakh habitations still have no school of their own. Where schools exist, 40 per cent have no pucca buildings, 39.72 per cent have no blackboards, and 59.50 per cent have no drinking water facilities, 35 per cent of the schools have a single teacher to teach 3 to 5 different classes. In 1950-51 there were 530,000 Primary School teachers in slightly over 200,000 schools (or about 2.5 teachers per school). Three decades later, in 1981-82, 1,360,000 teachers were employed in 490,000 primary schools which comes to about 2.7 teachers per school.

Under the above conditions, it did not matter whether science and mathematics teaching had a place in these schools or certain minimum standards were attained. It did not matter whether all children were enrolled in them and more importantly whether they were retained. It did not matter whether the syllabus was relevant to the poor or the school timings convenient to those who had to supplement the family income by some sort of work or poverty or caste discrimination hindered them from attending school. A facade of a system offering elementary education

for all had to be created and it has been created. Once we have registered that over 50 per cent of the primary schools in the country do not have a concrete structure or drinking water facility or playground, that 40 per cent of the schools are without blackboards, 70 per cent without libraries and 85 per cent without lavatory, all that remains is to wonder how teachers work under these conditions. Even the best qualified teacher cannot do much without a blackboard, a play space and a selection of children's book. Above all, a sterile environment will demoralise even the most highly motivated professional. Illiteracy is the result as we can see from the table.

Thus, the labouring masses in villages do not take primary education for granted; they see every day that only a few children survive five years of primary schooling (Kumar 1985). But the usefulness of a system has to be judged by the achievement of its objectives, and the outcome is disastrous. It is to the credit of the present document on education that it has not tried to make excuses for the gross failures of the present system and has clearly opted for new perspectives and radical changes to meet the present needs and future challenges. The fact that 77 per cent from the 6-14 age group do not complete Class VII is high enough to prove that the system generates enormous wastage of finances and human resources. The fact that as the present system functions, 144 million of the 192 million (1985-2000 AD) in the 6-14 age-group will enter the 21st century without formal elementary education is something that should make us seriously reflect and creatively devise new strategies and programmes to the challenge of universalisation of elementary education. The fact that over 500 million will be illiterate in the year 2000 and that half of the illiterate population of the world will

be in India (World Bank 1980) should create a new awareness of social responsibility and lead us to unambiguously fix our priorities vis-a-vis the different levels of education and use a multi-dimensional approach to deal with this national task with imaginative initiatives, programmes and experiments.

IDENTIFICATION OF DEPRIVED PEOPLE

Once it is agreed that more awareness and commitment are necessary for reconstructing primary education, an equally important point needs to be added which is that additional funds alone will not solve the problems primary education is facing. It is necessary to identify the groups that have been excluded from the educational system. Are they not the same sections of people whom we call the "**masses**" who live on the poverty line or below it? Are they not the same sections of people kept outside the stream of national progress in every other sphere of national activities and programmes? Are they not the children of illiterates (64 per cent), of those living on (25 per cent) and below (40 per cent) the poverty line? Do they not belong to the SC, ST and Backward classes and the women? Are they not mostly from the rural areas?

The other group, which by and large embraces the elite, prevents any radical reorientation of our educational system. This group brings in the sharpest contrast between the facilities available to the students of the rich as compared to the poor at the primary education level itself-bringing in a feeling of self-deficiency and insecurity among the poorest lot. But it is good to remember that the trend set by the elite is advantageous only from a short-range point of view. In the long run there is surely going to be greater unrest in the future for the simple reason that the mass of 500 million illiterates

Educational Development from 1950-51 to 1984-85

		1950-51 (actuals)	1960-61 (actuals)	1970-71 (actuals)	1980-81 (actuals)	1984-85** (actuals)
A.	Institutions (in numbers)					
i.	Primary	209,671	330,399	408,378	485,538	550,000
ii.	Middle	13,596	49,663	90,621	116,447	140,000
iii.	High/Hr Sec	7,288	17,257	36,738	51,594	60,000
iv.	Colleges					
	a. Arts, Sci., Commerce	548	1,161	2,587	3,393	3,500
	b. Professional	147	381	1,017	1,382	1,500
	c. Universities & deemed Univ.	28	44	93	123	135
B.	Enrolment By Stages (in '000s)					
	Primary (I-V)	19,155 (42.6)	34,995 (62.4)	57,045 (76.4)	72,688 (83.1)	84,766 (97.6)**
	Middle (VI-VIII)	3,120 (12.7)	6,705 (22.5)	13,315 (34.2)	19,846 (40.0)	27,383 (51.9)**
	High/Hr.Sec/Jr. College	1,481	3,483	7,167	11,281	13,490
	University & above	174	557	1,956	2,752	3,442
C.	Expenditure (Rs.in crores)					
	Total	114	344	1,118	3,746	6,000
	Plan	20	90	115	520	800
	Non-Plan	94	254	1,003	3,226	5,200

** Estimates only.

Figures in parenthesis indicate Cross Enrolment ratios.

Sources : i. For education and expenditure-Ministry of Education and Planning Commission.

ii. For higher education-UGC Reports.

iii. Yojana-June, 1985.

(if something drastic is not done now) at the end of the century will be further away from the privileged minority. The enormous technical and industrial progress that the country will have made by then will only raise greater expectations in them and generate greater frustrations and consciousness of the great injustice done to them by a selfish minority by keeping them out of the benefits of modern progress.

The policy makers and those in charge of executing policies for elementary education (cfr no.10 of part II of the Approach to the Seventh Five Year Plan and observe its radicality) have to learn much from the Japanese experience of removing totally illiteracy and universalising elementary education within a short period of 25 years. Their priority in 1885 was clear from the financing pattern of education-84 per cent for elementary education; secondary 2.8 per cent; University 8.3 per cent and Teacher training 4.9 per cent. The corresponding figures in 1910 were 67.4 per cent, 16.7 per cent, 10 per cent and 2.5 per cent and the same rough distribution continued right up to 1935-61.9 per cent, 18.7 per cent, 16.9 per cent and 2.5 per cent respectively, by which time the country had attained 90 per cent literacy. What is worth noting is that even in 1960 when there was 100 per cent literacy and enrolment at the primary level, 42 per cent of educational funds were spent for elementary education, 44.5 per cent for secondary and only 13.1 per cent at the university level.

OUR RESPONSE

We have, as a nation, to face the shameful fact of illiteracy (63 per cent), non-enrolment of a sizeable number of children in primary schools (still 20 per cent of the habitations have no schools) and the high rate of dropouts at the primary (40 per cent) and middle (27 per cent)

levels of education. Further, it is unbelievable but true that in many States funds allotted to Primary education are **NOT** fully used, that in fact a substantial proportion of these funds is diverted to other sectors of State expenditure. For example, during 1980-81 Madhya Pradesh Government spent over Rs.30 million less than the approved allocation of Rs.98 million for elementary education; similarly, West Bengal failed to spend Rs.39 million, Haryana Rs.22 million, during 1980-81 representing under-utilisation and diversion of resources. How does one account for this phenomenon?

Further, it is just intolerable that the educationally backward States like Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal spend less than the national per capita expenditure of Rs.68.20. It is well to remember that there is a correlation between the per capita expenditure and the rates of enrolment, retention and literacy. If, as has been recommended by experts, and is verified in many countries, 6 per cent instead of the present 3 per cent (7.2 per cent in First Plan and 2.6 per cent in the Sixth Plan) of the Central Budget is allocated for education, then a number of problems connected with elementary level financing will be solved. What is essential is to see that the new finances are not absorbed through political and vested interest pressures by high/higher secondary schools and higher levels. If this happens, then the situation of education as a whole in terms of equity will further deteriorate. The process by which the dual society is consolidated and strengthened can be reversed only by heavy and relevant inputs in the elementary education sector which lays the basis for the weaker sections to benefit from other sectors of education, and from the socio-political-economic and cultural life of the country.

The face of primary schooling in India cannot brighten unless we recast the financing pattern since the present funds allocated to the primary level of education are totally inadequate, unless a serious thought at mobilising funds is given, the project of revitalising and changing the educational system will be a non-starter.

The argument that a poor country can only afford a poor primary school is deceptive. It does not explain how the poor country is about to supply micro-computers to all its higher secondary schools and why we fail to give a human shape to our primary schools. As long as the primary school remains a bare structure of walls and a roof, and as long as this image is legitimised in the name of economy, we may as well forget about revitalising primary education and making education accessible to the poor.

All the above demand a political will on the part of the Government and a close collaboration and co-ordination between the Centre and the States. Education now being a concurrent subject, the Centre cannot be indifferent to the earmarking of funds for elementary education by the States. The paper **"Challenge of Education"** has identified the various constraints mainly arising from the paucity of funds, the present administrative structures and the teaching personnel. Not resolutely bracing ourselves at all levels of society to resolve these constraints is again to indulge in sterile discussion and to produce a plethora of literature on the problem. The whole nation has to be made conscious of the issues involved in the universalisation of elementary education keeping in mind the weaker sections.

PACKAGE SCHEMES: NEED OF THE HOUR

Primarily, the many sources of finances that have been suggested or identified in the Govern-

ment's recent document are to be studied and systematically tapped. Above all, private initiative to contribute for education (private donations and endowments have plummeted from 25 per cent at the beginning of the century to mere 3 per cent in 1980-81!) and community responsibility to make financial contribution has to be fostered.

In point of fact, the real issue is not "**where do we get or find the funds**" but our sense of priorities and our basic rationality. It seems that the fiscal policy in education today is totally adrift. The sense of priorities has vanished: only sustained pressures from people and from committed groups will elicit a response; pressures at every level have to be generated on behalf of primary education.

No doubt, low cost programmes have to be designed as far as possible; but this does not mean low quality programmes. It is surprising that we do not talk of low cost when it is the question of higher education or defence projects—we are very much quality conscious there. But these become constraints when the poor are concerned.

Pre-school education (or **balwadis**) which are so very necessary for the enrolment and retention at the primary level especially of the weaker sections, will require big financial inputs. Adult Education is another aspect which needs a full scrutiny and careful consideration. We are aware of how the '**National Adult Education Programme**' intended to bring literacy to those in the 15-35 age group was initially allocated Rs.500 crores and then trimmed to Rs.200 crores and achieved only meagre results. Besides economic reasons, there are many other social and political reasons why really **NAEP** did not take off the ground. Nevertheless without such a programme universalisation of elementary education will not be realised.

One of the components of **Adult Education** is literacy and there is a correlation between it and universalisation of elementary education. Besides, adult education is not mere literacy (as those designated to execute this programme think) but creating conditions to help the illiterates raise critical questions about their situation, realise their strengths, develop a positive self-image and acquire skills to organise themselves for wresting their legitimate rights and struggle against injustices. Adult education, in the final analysis, is to help the powerless majority to discover their humanity and their ability to live as human beings by reading rationally the world of oppression around themselves and acquiring skills to tackle their day-to-day problems of existence. It is this type of **Adult Education** that will help them realise the importance of education and motivate them to demand facilities for their children to acquire at least elementary education that is relevant to their situation. That is also the reason why the powerful elements oppose it.

Besides adult education, the recent initiative of the Government in introducing **Non-formal Education** especially for children not enrolled in school or dropouts in the educationally backward States, is essential to universalisation of elementary education. If this approach* to elementary education is not taken up seriously, then out of 64 million children in the 6-14 age-group during the Seventh Five Year Plan period, only 39 million will have been in the formal educational system. The number of illiterates will be augmented by at least 25 million and the country will have to continue literacy programmes till the end of the 21st century.

A few suggestions to make the dream of literacy and universalisation of elementary education a reality:

1. A firm political will in the political representatives of the people and especially the Government to consider it as an essential component for development of the nation and for the creation of an egalitarian, democratic and progressive India.

2. A realisation especially by the Government bureaucracy and educationists that radical changes in education cannot be effected without a simultaneous, integrated economic programme and social transformation.

3. To translate the authenticity of intentions regarding the universalisation of education by allocating 3 per cent of the **GNP** for elementary, non-formal and adult education. To tap private and voluntary sources of finance for the same purpose.

4. To form a cadre of educationists in the line of **IAS, IFS, IRS** etc., in the beginning specifically for the implementation of education at the elementary level (in reality of the **Weaker Sections**). Without a corps of educationists and administrators trained for and committed to this gigantic task, translation of resolutions regarding universalisation of elementary education will remain a vain dream.

5. Decentralisation of the system, from the State level to the district and taluk levels and fostering local initiatives in planning and executing education.

6. To devise ways and means for the continuing motivation and updating of teachers and creating mechanisms for supervision, evaluation and accountability. Special attention to be paid in recruiting and training of teacher trainers and trainees.

7. To initiate **Balwadis** in every habitation with the co-operation of **Mahila Mandals**. It is to be noted that 20 per cent of our habitations have no school and so the only solution for bringing education to these habitations is through the opening of nursery schools.

8. To make every Government and aided high/ higher secondary school (and as many as possible unaided high schools), every college (arts, science and technical) and university have an **Education Extension Unit**. This is one of the important ways of including the young in the task of universalisation of primary education.

9. To entrust educationally backward talukas to proven educational bodies with responsibility for elementary education for a specific period of time.

10. To orient all the development and service agencies of the **Government** and **Voluntary** agencies, towards realising universal literacy and elementary education targets, for without the education of the weaker sections, no real development service programmes will reach them.

11. To provide basic facilities to schools which lack them and to earmark greater funds for equipment and other educational facilities.

12. To use the information and media departments of the **Government** in promoting the cause of literacy and universalisation of elementary education so that the whole nation braces itself up to solve the problem of elementary education and thus enters the 21st century with an enlightened, educated, self-confident and socially responsible population of youth to build a new humanity.

CONCLUSION

The problem that we face is complex. It requires committed action from all concerned, decentralisation of education up to the village level and participation of local communities in the process of education and above all a firm political will to harness all the resources and agencies of the Government and Voluntary groups towards achieving elementary education for all children in the age-group of 6-14 years in a planned and systematic way within a definite period of time.

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CHAPTER - II

DROUGHT AND DROUGHT RELIEF PROGRAMMES : : AN OVER-VIEW

THIS paper is divided into **three** sections. The first is an examination of drought conditions in Karnataka with general notes on the same. The second section focuses on disaster response, the impact of these response on the affected groups, the structure and working of the support systems that have been evolved, as well as the manner in which assistance was delivered. The third and final section reflects, in practical terms, the issues raised in the earlier parts.

SECTION-I

Man has the highest form of consciousness. In his struggle for existence he enters into definitive relationships with nature. In this interaction, man tries to control and transform nature for his needs, at the same time also adapting himself to it. In this process, science and technology develop, which are in turn used to sustain nature. This has enabled man to live in otherwise inhabitable areas like deserts, jungles,

Many a times man has also failed to establish a favourable relationship mainly due to two reasons : exploitation of nature or irrational utilisation of nature for the benefit of one section of society against the whole and failure to use available science and technology leading to under-utilisation of natural resources. Viewed in this context, drought is the embodiment of imbalance of the relationship between man and nature.

DROUGHT DEFINED

Drought, according to the **National Agricultural Commission**, occurs when the rainfall is half or less than the normal where normal rainfall should be 5 mm or more. Agricultural drought is a period of four such consecutive weeks in a period from mid-May to mid-October or six such consecutive weeks during the rest of the year. If such drought occurs in one out of five years, the area is called a drought-prone area. When drought occurs in two out of five years, such areas are classified as chronic drought-prone areas.

The Indian Meteorological Department defines drought as a condition when rainfall is 75 per cent of the normal and severe drought as 50 per cent of the normal rainfall (Nagaraj, 1987).

Drought, in its broadest sense, means any lack of water for the normal needs of agriculture, livestock, industry or human consumption.

All the definitions emphasise "rainfall" failure as the cause of drought, and are inadequate. Inaccuracy originates in what is considered as "normal rainfall" for an area. "Normal" rainfall is taken either as an average or with a "good" monsoon year as the base. Applying these definitions is even more error-prone because installed rain gauges are very few. However, hardly any



Who protects who?

attempt is being made to make rainfall measurements more meaningful.

In practice the area under sowing or the subsequent agricultural output, as a percentage of a normal year, is used for declaration of drought. This data is only as dependable as the integrity of the Village accountants.

If one agrees that the definition of drought is inadequate, so are the causes of drought. Some list drought under natural calamities; a few as God's wrath; a few as men-made; some ascribe this to have been influenced by the exploitative practices of man. But no single cause is adequate to explain the occurrence of drought. However, it is agreed that just "rainfall failure" is not the cause of drought.

All said and done **drought is a challenge thrown by nature to man** and hence its management reflects our capability for crisis management. This part of crisis management relates to reducing the impact of drought rather than assessing causes of drought. Further, the fact that droughts are recurring in certain areas, with frightening regularity, indicates that something is seriously wrong with drought relief measures, absence of permanent measures to prevent drought etc.

A GENERAL PROFILE OF DROUGHT

- a. Effects : : a reduced cloud cover;
increased day-time
temperatures;
increased evaporation
rates; increasing likelihood of dust and sand
storm.
- b. Consequences : : dramatic decline of
surface water; severe

crop losses; soil erosion; food shortages; increased hunger; lower consumption levels; and malnutrition.

c. Actual immediate : : malnutrition
epidemiological
threat

d. Secondary : : malnutrition increases;
epidemiological **susceptibility** to all
threat . diseases increases,
but particularly measles
and diarrhoea.

Drought effects can be primary and secondary. Primary effects follow directly from the lack of water - decreased food production, impaired agro-economy; damage to land, natural environment etc.

Secondary ones following from the primary ones are : economic loss, radical population shifts, and post-drought erosion.

The State of Karnataka faces an unprecedented drought situation caused by the "failure" of the monsoons for the fifth year in succession (1987), and is emerging as one of the most chronic drought-prone State in India. In the last 30 years, 15 have been "bad" years making the current year's drought, just another turn in the many spells of dry season till now. Persistent drought conditions in a row is unusual and this phenomenon needs to be given its weight while assessing the impact of drought on the State's economy and social conditions.

MONSOON "FAILURE" THEORIES

There are three theories on why the monsoons

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have been so erratic this year. The first of them relates to a development in far away Peru. Apparently what is known as a warm ocean current, called the '**El Nino Phenomenon**' that laps the shores of this South American country, has persisted for four months, from April to July while it normally lingers there only from April 1 to 15. This according to climatologists, has affected the creation of a depression in the Bay of Bengal, which, in turn, has weakened the monsoon winds in the South Asian region.

According to the second theory, proffered by the **USAID**, there is a thick snow cover over the Himalayas which is concentrated on the Tibetan Plateau. This normally melts during the summer months. This has not happened and the consequent low temperature in the plains may have prevented the formation of a depression in the Bay of Bengal.

The third theory, which appeared in the July 10 edition of the Los Angeles Times, has it that over the past 50 years, rainfall between latitudes 35 and 70 degrees north, that is in the belt in which India, Mexico and some other South East Asian countries fall, has decreased by 10 percent. This study was done by the American scientists, John E Eastchild and Henry Dias.

It is, of course, possible that none of these phenomena singly caused the failure of monsoons this year. A combination of the three might have led to the calamity!

No. of drought-affected taluks between 1982 and 1987
(Total number of taluks in the State : 175)

Year	Affected by	
	South-West	North-East
1982 ..	80	103
1983 ..	17	128
1984 ..	70	105
1985 ..	129	135
1986 ..	29	51
1987(August)	127	-

(Note: South-West monsoon is from June to September
North-East monsoon is from October to December)

From the above it is clear that the North-East monsoon failed severely since 1982 with the South-~~East~~ monsoon varying in different degrees. It is worthwhile to state that the South-~~West~~ monsoon to a certain extent, saved the State from a near-Ethiopia situation :

Drought can be classified in terms of **THREE** major categories :-

a. The South-West monsoon usually sets in June. If this gets delayed or is marked with prolonged dry spells, then it is in **Pre-sowing or Sowing-season drought**.

This drought usually reduces area under kharif crops, which in turn affects total production. Moreover, such a reduction in sown area comes about due to conscious adjustments on the part of the farmer.

b. A dry spell in August and/or September leads to **Growing-season drought** (or late season drought). This occurs after the sowing operations are completed and when the crops are standing in the field. There will be partial or total loss in production mainly due to very low yield

rates. In addition to this it also causes a loss in investments already made in seeds, labour, fertilisers and pesticides. The result is disastrous for small and marginal farmers and agricultural labourers for whom the loss is on two counts i.e. a loss in crucial period of employment as well as a loss in production. As a result agricultural labourers and marginal farmers almost reach a stage of destitution.

c. **Drought of the Rabi Season** has a similar typology and impact as that of kharif season drought. Near famine conditions prevail when kharif and rabi season droughts occur together in a year.

If all the three categories of drought occur in a single agricultural year, its spread and impact appears to be more pronounced and pervasive (Deshpande, 1985).

TRENDS IN RAINFALL, LAND USE AND CROPPING PATTERN

A. RAINFALL PATTERN

Karnataka's case is something of interest to study. The State has five out of 14 very heavy rainfall areas in the country - Augumbe, Bagaman-dala, Hakut, Mundrote and Pulingothal- but 80 percent of the taluks fall under the category of semi-arid regions. Thus, a major portion of the State depends upon rainfall for its agriculture. The quantity and pattern of rainfall are known for their uncertainty, particularly in the eastern plains of the State. Floods are relatively a rare phenomena in the State. Droughts on the other hand are more severe causes for crop failure, in the eastern districts of the State.

As assessed by the Indian Irrigation Commission (1901-1903) the State will have 6 dry years,

**WATER LEVELS OF MAJOR IRRIGATION RESERVOIRS
(AS ON 28.8.87).**

Sl. No.	Name of Reservoir	FRL (ft.)	Live capacity (TMC)	Year	Level (ft.)	Capacity (TMC) (above MDDL)	In flow	Out flow	Area notified for the year 1987 ; (ha.)
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1.	K.R.Sagar	124.30	40.32	1987	91.20	8.29	9251	1259	79310
				1986	123.80	39.68	2415	1118	
				1985	119.18	33.63	3519	724	
				1984	123.94	39.87			
2.	Kabini	2234.00	9.72	1987	2280.02	7.25	12000	1000	35850
				1986	2283.50	9.38	4176	1866	
				1985	2281.91	8.37	6175	5900	
				1984	2281.43	3.08			
3.	Hemavathy	2922.00	32.73	1987	2889.44	9.36	8970	1228	38000
				1986	2919.68	30.50	2445	3365	
				1985	2906.92	20.05	3142	2799	
				1984	2919.65	30.47			
4.	Harangi	2859.00	7.75	1987	2846.03	5.03	6021	366	23790
				1986	2856.93	7.05	1122	1004	
				1985	2856.00	6.73	2200	2950	
				1984	2855.72	6.65			
5.	Bhadra	186.00	63.05	1987	141.00	19.06	6723	330	98000
				1986	179'-2"	54.72	2213	2954	
				1985	171'-3½"	45.90	3593	3107	
				1984	133'-3"	59.59			
6.	Tungabhadra	1633.00	115.68	1987	1608.70	40.10	34207	8472	259400
				1986	1632.82	115.06	8869	14297	
				1985	1632.30	112.80	7945	9636	
				1984	1632.80	114.89			
7.	Ghataprabha	2175.00	46.75	1987	2137.86	21.52	6712	100	39000
				1986	2173.15	45.30	2703	2866	
				1985	2173.17	44.75	6123	652	
				1984	2175.00	46.83			
8.	Malaprabha	2079.50	29.32	1987	2049.25	1.07	2604	52	73140
				1986	2062.50	10.25	1400	2420	
				1985	2057.75	6.40	1564	2428	
				1984	2070.05	17.52			
9.	Narayanapur	1615.00	30.47	1987	1602.90	15.70	73590	72780	68840
				1986	1595.48	8.87	20900	19100	
				1985	1595.50	8.90	23550	29060	
				1984	1592.80	6.95			

and 3 years of severe drought in every decades. The analysis of the monthly rainfall data from 1914 to 1970 reveals that the continuous periods of drought of more than 2 months occur most frequently in Channarayana, Bijapur and Dakshina Kannada districts.

A. recent study on the variability of rainfall in the State observes that the variation of the monthly, seasonal and annual rainfall in the meteorological subdivisions of interior Karnataka are not coherent implying that while droughts occur in some subregions of the subdivision, other regions may have normal or excess rainfall. Further, basing themselves on a computer analysis of district wise rainfall figures, the authors argued that, contrary to the State Government's claims, 1983-84 and 1984-85 were years of normal rainfall and 1985-86 did not experience a very severe drought (Gadgil, 1987).

This means, it is neither possible to have any practical control over occurrence of rainfall, nor to predict the occurrence of droughts. However, certain estimations are possible. Hence, the best way is to find out ways and means to meet the situation.

B. Land use in Karnataka shown a significant proportion of fallows and cultivable waste. Even in an agriculturally good year like 1978-79, together it formed 11.11 per cent of total geographical area. Instead of declining, this proportion has increased over 1960-61 level of 10.3 percent. The sharp increase in 1980-81 in current fallows could be attributed to drought conditions. But such under utilisation of land cannot be attributed to climatic conditions alone. In absolute terms idle lands which are neither cultivated nor afforested increased from 20 lakh hec. in 1960-61 to 21.2 lakh hec. in 1978-79 and further to 25.2 lakh hec. in 1980-81 which is surprising

in a land-hungry country like ours. Even if additional 10 lakh hec. are brought under productive use-cultivation or forestry- it could mean a significant contribution to generate both income and employment.

Net sown area has increased from 101.4 lakh hec. in 1960-61 to 103.2 lakh hec. in 1978-79, not at the expense of idle land but at the expense of permanent pastures and other grazing land. Significantly, net sown area has averaged out at 104 lakh hec. since 1980-81. Incidentally, this is a threat to the State's livestock economy, since these grazing lands have declined notably from 17.4 to 14 lakh hec. between these years, the level of 1980-81 being still lower at 13.5 lakhs. There is need, not only for increasing this land, but also for making them more productive and even commercially viable.

It is pertinent to note that with the weakening of village communities and increasing significance of private property, these lands which have traditionally been a community resource have been neglected. Unless they are improved, an important source and a resource for improving our livestock economy would be eroded. Further, there is under-utilisation of even cultivated land. This is reflected both in low cropping intensity and low productivity of sown area. Karnataka has one of the lowest cropping intensities in the country being only 107.9 in 1978-79.

C. CROPPING PATTERN

Karnataka is a '**museum**' of crops. It has almost all kinds of crops, due to its diverse physical and climatic patterns. Karnataka is essentially a dry farming State with only 20 percent of the net sown area under assured irrigation and another 20 per cent of net sown area under reasonably assured rainfall areas. Thus, around 60

A comparative study of the Argicultural Production in the last six years as compared to 1956-57 the year of State Re-organisation, is as under :

Production in lakh tonnes

Sl. No.	Crops	1956-57 (FRE)	81-82 (FRE)	82-83 (PRE)	83-84 (PRE)	84-85 (FFR)	85-86 (Advanced estimates)	86-87 (Progra- mmes)
1.	Rice	10.69	23.64	24.51	22.72	23.72	14.72	29.08
2.	Jowar	8.53	17.92	17.15	17.88	16.39	11.95	19.16
3.	Ragi	7.60	14.28	13.86	14.34	11.12	7.77	16.57
4.	Maize	0.08	4.17	4.04	4.50	4.13	2.57	7.41
5.	Bajra	1.13	3.23	2.90	3.19	1.81	1.38	3.66
6.	Wheat	0.86	2.12	2.08	1.99	1.90	1.46	1.92
7.	Minor Millets	1.44	1.49	1.47	1.50	1.00	0.48	1.59
8.	Total Cereals	30.13	66.85	66.01	66.32	60.07	40.33	79.39
9.	Total Pulses	3.20	6.23	6.05	4.61	4.61	4.67	8.61
10.	Total Food-grains	33.33	73.08	72.06	64.68	64.68	45.00	88.00
11.	Total Oilseeds	7.20	8.63	9.44	10.73	10.73	7.04	13.45
12.	Cotton (in lakh bales of 170 Kgs.)	34.46	142.86	141.51	7.58	7.58	3.77	8.82
13.	Sugarcane	5.13	6.21	6.54	143.90	143.90	Not estimated	149.00
14.	Tobacco	0.18	0.29	0.28	0.31	0.31	0.14	0.55

FRE = Fully Revised Estimates.

PRE = Partially Revised Estimates.

FFR = Final Forecast Report.

DE = Departmental Estimates.

percent of the cultivation is carried out under inadequate rainfall conditions.

It is worthwhile to briefly note the ten kinds of agro-climatic zones based on rainfall patterns, soil types, elevation and topography, and major crops and vegetation.

- a. **The North-Eastern Transition Zone** comprises of the entire district of Bidar, and Aland and Chincholi taluks of Gulbarga district. The rainfall ranges from 830-890 mm and about 63 percent of it is received from February to August. The important crops grown are pulses, jowar, oilseeds, bajra, cotton and sugarcane.
- b. **The NorthEastern Dry Zone** comprises Deodurg, Manvi and Raichur taluks and all taluks of the Gulbarga district except Aland and Chincholi. The rainfall ranges from 633 to 806 mm. About 55 percent of the rainfall is received from September to December in this rabi zone. The main crops are jowar, bajra, oilseeds and cotton.
- c. **The Northern Dry Zone** consists of the entire Bijapur district and parts of Bellary, Raichur, Dharwad and Belgaum. The rainfall ranges from 464.5 to 787.7 mm. About 52 percent of the annual rainfall is received from September to December in this rabi zone. The crops are rabi, jowar, maize, bajra, groundnut, cotton, wheat, sugarcane and tobacco.
- d. **The Central Dry Zone** comprises the entire Chitradurga district and parts of Hassan, Chikmagalur and Tumkur. The annual rainfall ranges from 453.5 to 717.7 mm of which more than 55 percent is in the pre-monsoon and monsoon seasons in this kharif zone.

The principal crops are ragi, paddy, jowar, pulses and oilseeds.

- e. **The Eastern Dry Zone** consists of parts of the Tumkur and the entire Bangalore and Kolar districts. The annual rainfall ranges from 679 to 888.9 mm, more than 50 percent of which is received in the pre-monsoon and monsoon seasons. The main crops are ragi, paddy, pulses, maize and oilseeds.
- f. **The Southern Dry Zone** consists of parts of Mysore, Tumkur and Mandya districts and a small portion of the Hassan district. The annual rainfall ranges from 670.6 to 888.6 mm of which more than 50 per cent is received in kharif season, and as such this is a kharif zone. The principal crops grown are paddy, ragi, pulses, other millets and sugarcane.
- g. **The Southern Transition Zone** comprises Hassan, Chikmangalur, Shimoga and Mysore districts and a small portion of the Tumkur district. The rainfall ranges from 611.7 to 1054 mm annually. More than 60 percent of this rainfall is received in pre-monsoon and monsoon months. Thus, this is also a predominant kharif zone. The principal crops grown are paddy, ragi, pulses, jowar and tobacco.
- h. **The Northern Transition Zone** comprises parts of Belgaum and Dharwad districts. The annual rainfall ranges from 619.4 to 1303 mm and about 61 percent of this is received in the pre-monsoon and monsoon periods thus forming a predominantly kharif zone. The main crops are paddy, jowar, groundnut, pulses, sugarcane and tobacco.
- i. **The Hilly Zone** is made up of parts of Uttara

Kannada, Belgaum, Shimoga, Chikmagalur, Dharwad and Kodagu districts and small parts of the Hassan district. The annual rainfall is received in the kharif season only, and ranges from 930 to 1570 mm. The principal crops are paddy and pulse.

- j. **The Costal Zone** is composed of parts of Uttara Kannada and Dakshina Kannada districts. The annual rainfall ranges from 3011 to 4694.4 mm of which 80 per cent is received in the monsoon season; this is also a kharif zone. The crops grown are paddy, pulses and sugarcane.

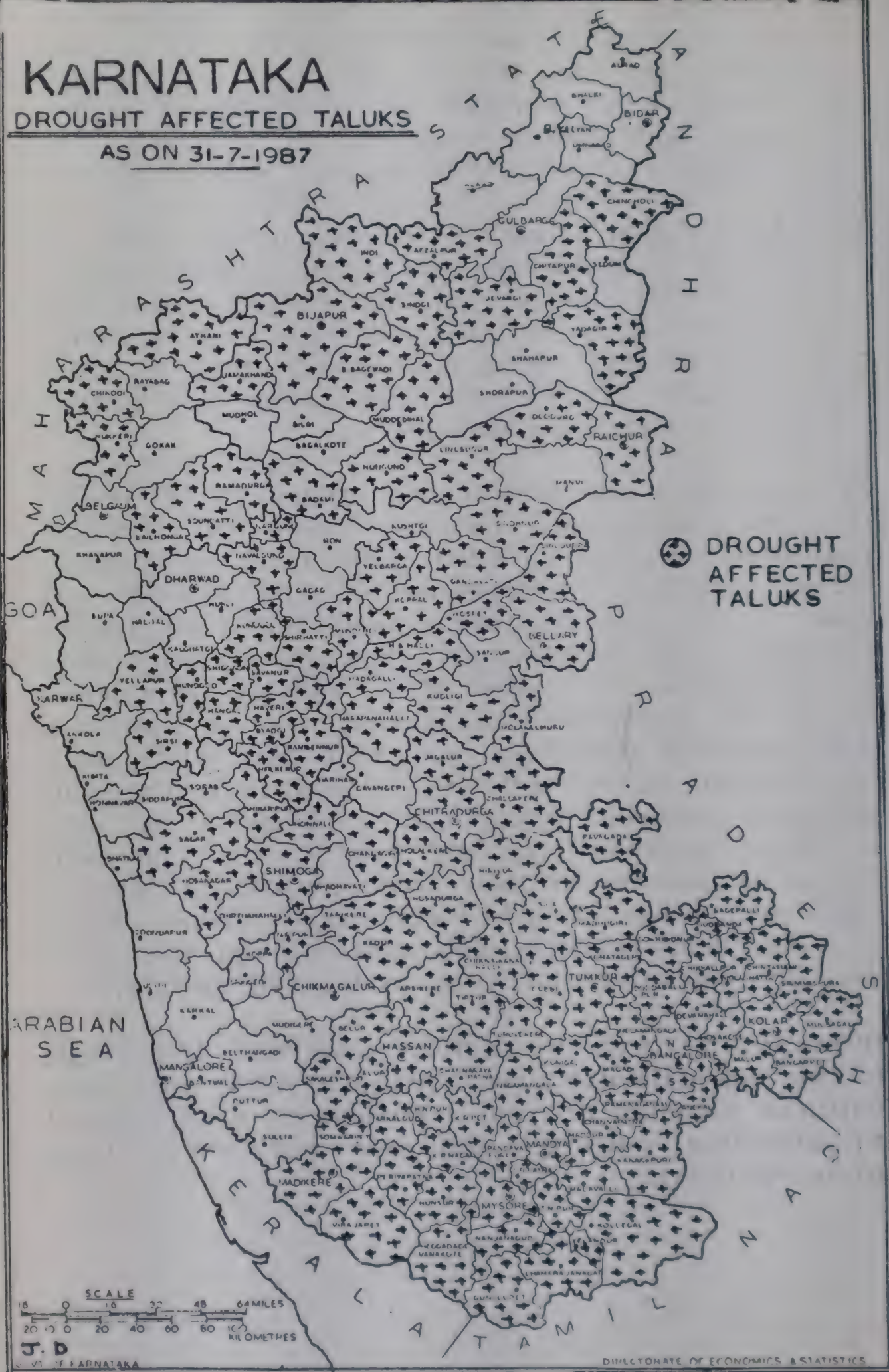
In a recent study Gadgil and others (1987) conclude that Karnataka, on the basis of cropping patterns, can be divided into five agricultural zones viz., (i) predominantly rice grown; (ii) most of the area devoted to ragi but a significant fraction (say 20 percent) rice cultivation; (iii) a combination of jowar with varying proportion of cotton, groundnut and pulses; (iv) a transition zone between rice belt and ragi belt with about 50 percent each; and (v) intermediate cropping patterns between jowar and ragi belts as well as those between rice and ragi belts. The mean cropping pattern in this zone involves a significant proportion of all three major crops. (Note : A few more studies are available on this subject are not cited here due to lack of space).

However, it can be safely asserted that some of the agroclimatic zones hitherto used for agricultural planning are not homogeneous with respect to cropping patterns and new parameters have to be evolved.

KARNATAKA

DROUGHT AFFECTED TALUKS

AS ON 31-7-1987



SECTION - II

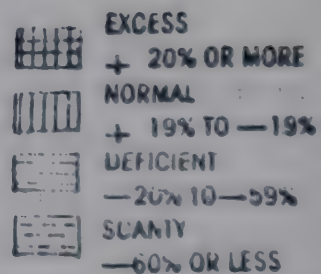
Generally, there are six phases in any drought situation viz., pre-drought period; warning phase; emergency phase; rehabilitation (transitional) phase; recovery phase and reconstruction phase. Government interventions, by and large, are limited to the emergency phase like providing foodgrains, water, cattle sheds, fodder etc. Obviously, these efforts aim to stop certain trends in the affected rural areas like out-migration, unemployment, starving of cattle etc., temporarily.

We will briefly describe the existing arrangements that govern the financing of drought relief work for which the State seeks the aid of the Central Government.

That the financing of relief expenditure is primarily the responsibility of State Governments has been accepted by successive Finance Commissions including the recent **Elghth** Finance Commission. Notwithstanding this view, these Commissions have been recommending schemes of Central assistance for meeting relief expenditure. They obviously realised that, on occasions, the magnitude of expenditure required to be incurred might well be beyond the means of the States.

The Second Finance Commission introduced the concept of "**margin money**", and built it into the expenditure requirements of the States. This concept was retained by the succeeding commissions, though they varied the manner of computation of the same. This was done with the object that the margin money should be immediately made available for use in the event of calamities of more than modern severity. It was only if the expenditure requirements exceeded the "margin money" that central assistance was to be extended. Prior to the **Eighth** Finance Commission

DISTRICT-WISE RAINFALL
DEPARTURE IN
PERCENTAGE FOR THE PERIOD
1st JUNE, '87 TO 2nd SEPT. '87



the margin money fixed for the State of Karnataka was Rs.20 million; the Eighth Finance Commission increased this limit to Rs.60 million.

Where the expenditure required to be incurred is estimated to exceed the 'margin money', the State concerned has to present a memorandum to the Centre setting out its demands for Central assistance. This memorandum is examined by the Union Ministry of Agriculture, which is the coordinating Ministry for this purpose. Thereafter a Central team consisting of officers drawn from different Ministries is sent to make an on-the-spot assessment and make a report. This report is considered by the High Level Committee on Relief, which recommends ceilings of expenditure for different items. Based on these recommendations, the Ministry of Finance fixes the ceilings of expenditure and communicates them to the State concerned. Expenditure in excess of the margin money, subject to the ceilings so fixed, qualifies for Central assistance.

The Finance Commission also distinguishes between droughts on one hand, and floods, cyclones, earthquakes etc., on the other. It suggests different patterns of Central assistance for these two categories of natural calamities. Though a strong plea for abolition of this differentiation was made before the Eighth Finance Commission, this system still continues. The Eighth Finance Commission recommended that 50 percent of the margin money should be contributed by the Centre. The last point to be noted in the financing of relief schemes is that of the linking of Central assistance to Plan assistance. However, the fact remains that the major portion of advance Plan assistance is for relief employment and drinking water supply schemes. The States are requested to dovetail these with their Plan programmes either by accelerating Plan schemes or by taking up schemes which, in any case, would have

been taken up in the near future as part of the Plan programme.

During the emergency phase, generally, State Government intervenes. The main thrust of the Government's measure in providing relief is four-fold :

- a. employment for all persons turning out for jobs;
- b. ensuring drinking water supply;
- c. fodder for cattle;
- d. supply of adequate foodgrains.

The Government also writes-off farmer's loans (mostly this is a political decision) as part of the drought relief work.

In 1986, the Government of Karnataka had resorted to import of fodder from Punjab and Haryana; also employment generation schemes were activated.

In Karnataka, as perhaps elsewhere in the country, highly significant changes have occurred in the nature of the problems thrown up by droughts. since 1982, the State has been facing drought in various degrees some severe, some moderate and some mild. Both kharif and Rabi crops have failed during these years in varying degrees. With no sign of this trend abetting, it is useful to look at the relief work carried by the Government in light of local risk-management capabilities, efforts and our own involvement.

During the emergency phase in 1986 (January to August 1986) we, at the Cente, planned for a limited intervention to assist the Weaker Sections to recover from their traumatic experiences and give them confidence. We set our fundamental goals for the limited intervention as follows:

- a. to develop capabilities;
- b. use of local resources to create durable community assets;
- c. to facilitate people to receive Government relief benefits;

We concentrated more on the **PROCESS** rather than on results or products. We focussed on areas where we had already established a good working relationship with local **NGOs** viz., Kolar and Tumkur districts. Simultaneously, we also initiated an observation-based disaster research study to understand (a) the local knowledge that is available to tackle drought; (b) to review our own and the Government relief programmes, and (c) to evolve a new philosophy for drought relief works which could lead to percepts and practices. We linked this observation-study with our other research study on Common Property Resources to draw broad parallels and conclusions.

The people in agriculturally risky environments like Kolar, Tumkur, Chikmagalur and Chitradurga have evolved several measures to deal with production losses due to drought. The primary response in the early stages rely on local resources and capabilities. These measures have been observed with minor variations in several small farming systems in dry to drought-prone areas. Our observations have confirmed three features:

Firstly, people have tremendous adaptability and resourcefulness, in coping with problems during the earlier phases of drought. **Secondly**, disasters like drought tend to draw together people within a community and integrate them into a united front to face challenge. This tendency is very high when the drought gains momentum and continues to aggravate the conditions. **Thirdly**, the various social control mechanisms deve-

loped to insure conformity to group expectations become operationally intensified, thereby enhancing group morale and collective action. Some of the old structural alignments begin to reassert themselves in the face of challenges to survival. Sometimes, the old norms may completely be abandoned in the favour of new norms, generated by the crisis management.

On the other hand, crisis situations also engendered or aggravated conflicts between social groups. Simultaneously, there was also a disappearance of social organisation. Each of these features needs to be illustrated.

None of the families, in those villages where we observed studied, left their native place in search of work or borrowed money from outside sources. People managed mostly through informal mutual aid. When the drought continued people on their own identified labour availability in the neighbouring areas and moved out for employment (yet, it was no migration). When the situation attained grave proportions, the migration began yet, this migration was a group-migration i.e. either the entire village migrated or specific caste groups migrated. Such group-migrations were common during February-June during every drought year. This migration is in addition to the normal seasonal migration of labour forces.

On the other hand, a few of the villages also witnessed heightening tensions among various social groups; in most of the cases 'water' became the focal issue.

A close scrutiny of the claimants for relief assistance and other concessions from the Government was an eye-opener. The claimants of benefits were mostly non-victims or those marginally affected; provision of drought relief assistance to these two groups made the relief schemes

mere extensions of the Government's welfare policies, not directly connected with drought. The direct result of such indiscriminate distribution of relief was that the recipients were just eagerly looking forward to the next disaster.

In this distribution of aid, local or regional political elites, regardless of their party affiliations, have also contributed their new belief structures. This has to be seen in the light of the lack of priorities shown by the Government.

One aspect of the debate on relief measures relates to the identification of the rural poor so as to direct the droughtalleviation programmes at them. In the absence of a uniformly accepted drought norm, the use of weaker sections (based on normal indicators) as a base line functions as a proxy. This correlation leads to lack of productive assets as the baseline. The structure and distribution of drought is also not uniform.

The struggle among different competing interests to exercise control over the use of available resources and to appropriate relief measures is an important aspect. In socially stratified villages this struggle assumes acute forms.

As the drought conditions worsen, children from weaker sections (socially and economically) start dropping out from school; progressively pupils from other sections also tend to drop out. These children drop out for **three** reasons :- **a.** to supplement family income; **b.** to take care of cattle (mostly to escort cattle for grazing to places where fodder is still available-for example from Tumkur areas people usually go over to Mandya and Mysore) ; **c.** as the social organisation of the village gets disorganised, the children lose confidence and motivation.

We observed a minimum change of 12 percent and maximum change of 37 percent wherein households had withdrawn their children from school. Of those withdrawn from school 53 percent were in primary school and girls constituted a substantial number.

Where the family is landless and hold a few milch animals (consequently depending on income derived from this source even during normal periods) the drop out of children is observed to be very high since 1984. Further, non-enrolment of children is also found to be very high, it varies from 27 percent in Sira Taluk to 8 percent in Koppa Taluk. This is due to the outmigration of animals and the children taking care of these animals. Of the children dropped out from schools (between 6-16 years) 32 percent were involved in grazing activities outside the village; 7 percent worked in their own fields; about 40 percent worked in others fields and the rest worked at home.

SECTION - III

Drought has been a persistent feature and is, now, an annual feature. The severity of drought should be a matter of the gravest concern to policy-makers in Governmental and nongovernmental organisations. Unfortunately, droughts tend to be events of sensationalism with a widespread, but short-lived concern. Press coverage, public attention, elite concern and governmental involvement coverage once an event of ghastly proportions takes place and then the interest wears off quickly. Hence the '**new value**' of the situation becomes important. Since our involvement is the outgrowth of interest in the broader issue of disaster preparedness at the community level, our main focus is/was an understanding of the perception and attitudes of drought victims and the human response patterns associated with

**STATEMENT INDICATING THE CENTRAL ASSISTANCE RECEIVED & EXPENDITURE
INCURRED ON DROUGHT RELIEF IN KARNATAKA SINCE 1982-83.**

(Rs. in crores)

Year	Central assistance sought by the State Government	Ceilings approved , by the G.O.I.	Expenditure incurred		Actual Central assistance received
			Exclusively under scarcity head Account	Including under all plan schemes	
1	2	3	4	5	5
1982-83	78.00	8.81	16.77	29.30	10.00
1983-84	61.00	14.00	31.52	71.05	19.13
1984-85	209.50	32.73	39.87	152.05	31.13
1985-86	i)	89.00			
	ii)	151.00			
	iii)	271.00	76.14	212.15	52.45
1986-87	i)	77.00	50.20	73.11	43.55
	ii)	11.00	-	-	3.82
1987-88	i)	210.00	-	-	-
TOTAL	1,157.50	171.82	214.50	537.66	150.08

Source : Department of Finance, Karnataka, Bangalore.

preparedness. But this cannot be considered in isolation from the policy initiatives and strategies of the Governmental agencies and NGOs. The discussions on the salient features/issues thrown up by this research observation-study is elaborated herein.

The increase in drought-proneness is one result of the absence of a viable natural resource management. During droughts there is increased marginalisation of the weaker sections. At the centre of the drought and drought-relief issue are the parallel problems of land and economic opportunity. Finally, if the magnitude of drought is an outgrowth of underdevelopment and wrong priorities, how can we expect to reduce the impact with a few employment generation schemes and traditional forms of assistance?

Our field study indicates that among the social and institutional variables, group-sanctioned individual response turns out to be important in regard to decisions on migration, seeking aid etc. Social legitimisation assumes importance with regard to various aspects while facing the drought conditions. Similarly, family ties, kinship bonds and socio-economic matrices within the caste/social structure emerge as important factors (e-g) entire villages out-migrating has now become a common phenomena.

At times, it is stated that disasters are sudden and unforeseen events that disrupt normal activities and slow or retard progress toward economic and social development. This conception has little value when the situation continues for five successive years and the conditions go on worsening. The drought-relief schemes also point to the social and economic inequities with in the afflicted societies and threaten the established order. It also underscores the Government's inability to act in time.

The agro-climatic zones, taken together show clearly, the whole State, at one time or other throughout the year, receives rainfall in varying degrees. The distribution of precipitation is such that it is extremely difficult to limit and define periods of drought in different parts of the State at different or even at the same periods of time. Moreover, inconsistency in the behaviour of the monsoons, leading sometimes to late showers, may also herald drought situations since crops not receiving rainfall when they should, give rise to drastically poor yields which have subsequent adverse effects on the human condition in the affected area.

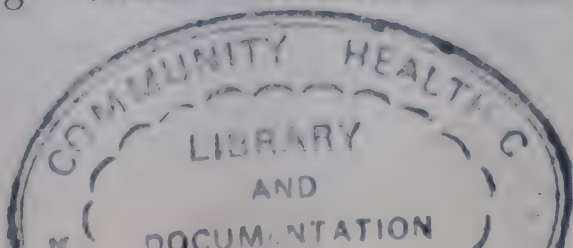
One major implication of Government interventions is a decline in the community's confidence and ability to challenge and face the situation. Mutual aid and cooperation seems to be fast disappearing. At least the younger generations are **conditioned** to wait for some resources or aid from the Government, where such aid was forthcoming; otherwise, the youth prefer to leave the village for good. "**Relief syndrome**" has taken roots. This remark is made here not to underestimate Governmental intervention or people's traditional abilities but to specify the emergence of a trend.

The implementation of relief measures by the Government in practice initiated characteristically by freezing or total writing off of farmer's loans, electricity dues etc. By its very nature, this act of the Government inevitably benefits the middle and rich peasants who are much better fitted both economically and socially for survival unlike their poorer counterparts. This also underscores the presence of a strong farmer's lobby in the State which wields much political clout.

Successive Chief Ministers were vying with each other in demonstrating their attention for the

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drought victims. Here, the quantum of relief aid distributed and the number of recipients were considered easy, publicity oriented indicators. The definite impact of this trend is that "**distribution**" and "**receipts**" gained legitimacy. Even viewed in this context of distribution and receipt, the weakest sections neither received any benefits nor could they seek the same with confidence. The attitude of the Government officials (including School Teachers) during a period of disaster needs some attention. As the drought condition worsens either they tend to look after their own fields or are busy collecting some data for the Government's schemes.

The most vital factor in the entire schemes is the attitude of Government officials, who serve as the implementators and have a direct bearing on the strategy, and consequently on the technical and administrative efficiency.

The official attitudes can be divided into three main areas. **Firstly**, drought relief schemes, like most schemes, formulated by sincere bureaucrats in India remains at the level of good intentions; regularly symptoms are criticised severely, the causes mentioned in passing and the cure left to do-gooders! These officials also make quite a few noises regarding drought relief, developmental process etc. A recurring theme with them are that if "adequate measures are not taken for conservation of resources, optimum utilisation of it etc ... regional imbalances and social justice will widen further ... eco-system will be further damaged". The nicest thing one can say about these officials is that they know their limitations within the present system and want outsiders to do the more difficult tasks for them.

The **second** attitude relates to the official pragmatism. Generally most officials' action are rule-

based and it would be unrealistic to expect them to have any broader philosophy of their own. A few have evolved a set of principles over a period of time as a result of their own experience and exposure. In general, they view people only as beneficiaries i.e. dependent on the Government for their survival.

The **third** attitude is the officials' indifference to decentralise the operations. None of the officials we encountered really decentralised the relief operations. But they will "consult" hundreds of colleagues before finalising something.

All said and done, relief programmes, in order to be implemented are completely dependent on the bureaucracy.

The excessive publicity given to drought had some side-effects in those villages where the rainfall and other facilities were sufficient. In a few villages, people stopped sowing operations (Koppa Taluk, June 1986) when they heard the news that some parts of their district were droughtaffected (deficient in rainfall). This was despite the fact that their respective villages received sufficient rainfall. Every village aspires to get it declared as "**drought hit**", which would qualify it for relief funds, programmes.

A glaring weakness in the country's overall drought relief strategy is the lack of an effective and efficient drought prediction system. The present system relies mainly on rainfall distribution patterns which, being dependent on the vagaries of nature, are intrinsically unpredictable and irrational. Thus, any drought relief measures developed and mounted on the basis of such information will in the greater part be self-defeating and minimally successful. This is because an area receiving good rainfall this month may be considered drought-hit if the crops, requiring

the rainfall two months ago, did not receive it then. As a result there would be a destabilisation of the agro-system in the area with its accompanying socio-economic conditions of the people living in the areas.

In line with 3.12 an interesting point of the relief aid is the Centre-State polemics over the definition and criteria of "**drought**". The Centre takes an over-view of the situation whereas the State relies on rainfall data. This, no doubt, leads to the variation in determining degree of drought.

Another point of debate between the State-Centre is on the quantum of drought assistance (Deshpande, 1985). What the State Government generally quotes as the assistance required is always greater than the figure arrived at by the Central Government or a Team appointed by it. The difference is more pronounced when the two Governments are formed by different political parties. Elsewhere in this Section a Statement showing the Central assistance sought by the Government of Karnataka and quantum of assistance received is given for a better understanding.

However, recent events point out that even where the same political party is in power, both at the Centre and in States, the quantum of assistance sought and received differs. The situation in Maharashtra is a case point-the State sought around Rs.560 crores as aid in 1983-84 but received only around Rs.80 crores.

This brings to the fore the politics of drought management. The whole issue, it is true, assumes political overtones and charges are freely traded about the neglect of the drought situation either by the State. The reactions to drought relief measures are now clearly divided along political lines.

Already the State faces a resources crunch and the Seventh Plan has been cut by about 15 per-cent or so. Without cutting the Plan further, the State Government's ability to raise resources is limited. Hence the State necessarily depends on the Centre. Even the Centre is left with only two options (given the **claimed drought conditions** throughout the Country) viz., by imposing a special drought relief tax as it did during the 1971 War or through deficit financing. Either way, there will be a political fall out which is likely to take its toll of the present Centre leadership.

(**This Chapter** is a preliminary and tentative statement of the problem. A more substantive analysis on the basis of extensive data collected is under preparation. We benefitted enormously from discussions with RS Deshpande and S.Satya-narayan).

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CHAPTER - III

THE INITIATIVE

(An attempt at empowering the weaker sections through a Movement of Education - both Formal and Non-Formal)

BACKGROUND

THE two separate events detailed in earlier Chapters facilitated a new process of thinking and initiation. During our involvement we realised the divide between the powerful and the powerless more markedly than ever, and we concretely experienced how the poor are denied not only programmes earmarked for their welfare and self-reliance but all other services as well. One example will illustrate how the welfare schemes do not reach the poorest sections.

Karnataka is one of the foremost States to have taken up housing in a major way. While the Government has launched several other rural and urban housing programmes in the past, the People's Housing Scheme (PHS) has come to be considered as the most massive and prestigious

of its welfare programmes in the rural areas. Started in 1973, it seeks to provide subsidised houses to the poorest, who are defined as those who are siteless and landless and earn less than Rs.2,000 per annum. Special consideration is to be given to minorities, ex-servicemen and political sufferers. Being heavily subsidised by the Government, with only the initial Rs.500 to be contributed by the beneficiary, either in the form of voluntary labour or materials for laying the foundation, and the rest by the Government - Rs.1,000 as loan and Rs.1,000 as an outright grant - the scheme is primarily a public welfare measure. Fundamentally, in contrast to a public intervention scheme where the objective is to change the very pattern of income distribution by intervention in the production system, the **PHS** is confined to mitigating inequalities through subsidised housing within a given system of unequal distribution. Thus, the **PHS** is to be evaluated not merely as a housing scheme per se but in a broader social perspective.

In an evaluation study titled "**Distribution of Welfare: People's Housing Scheme in Karnataka**" by Bakhru (1984), the researcher concludes that the very provisions of the scheme and manner of its implementation were such that the scheme not merely failed to provide subsidised houses to the poorest but has in the process reinforced structural and social inequalities. With the major implementors coming from the rural elite, the **PHS** in Karnataka was used as free patronage to further social control in one village and to reap monetary gains in the other. Given such a set up within which the schemes function the root of the problem can only be tackled if the implementors themselves can be changed. Unless such schemes are represented by the poorest themselves and ensure grassroot participation any change in the scheme itself, however good,

would only have a marginal impact. This would be true of any other scheme too.

Among the major objectives of the drought relief measures undertaken by the State Government was to provide employment to all able-bodied persons who offer themselves for work, and to see that no one was denied employment for want of funds. Our experience of this employment generation scheme was also not dissimilar from the earlier one.

The Centre began to think of alternatives in its endeavour to build **people's power** of the **weakest sections**. It was felt that though the organisation of the poor (economically and socially deprived sections) was essential to fight injustice and affirm basic human rights, it was insufficient to elicit the latent power of the helpless people. The factor of education, it was felt, was absolutely necessary to intensify the organisation of people and to release their individual and collective potentialities.

A BRIEF NOTE ON THE EDUCATION SCENE:

Education is a functional sub-system of modern society. It is one of the 14 **syb**-systems which can be identified according to the human theory of modern society by the Brazillian Sociologist **AR Muller**. In this perspective education belongs to the category of "**real**" or "**concrete**" systems, as distinct from the abstract or conceptual ones. It can be physically identified by its components: separate buildings, definite categories of users, specialised personnel, distinct courses of study, languages etc. These features represent first level of "**differentiation**" of education, the boundaries that set it visibly apart from the other sub systmes within a society. At the second level, education contributes to the emergence

of awareness and equitable social order through conscious social movements (however debateable these aspects are). It is also a process which takes place mainly, but not only, within the sub system.

A programme of universal education has three components, namely, universal facilities, universal enrolment and universal retention. Universal facilities may not ensure universal enrolment, and universal enrolment may not guarantee universal retention. On the other hand, differential participation may render the growth of education instrumental in social differentiation. In that case education becomes an instrument of change but in a different direction.

Acharya (1985) observes certain salient features, viz., it is child labour and labour relations which are the two main obstacles to popular education. In a rural society like ours the land owners are against universal education for fear of deterioration of labour relations and erosion of easy supply of child labour. On the other hand, the landless labourers suffer from internal contradictions between individual interest and class interest because of child labour. These families consider the child as an economic unit; also they are not sure of the benefits of education but apprehensive of their employers' wrath. Thus, the crucial question for a programme of universal elementary education is how to motivate the weaker sections towards education. One has to resolve to design a new education programme which is likely to strengthen the bargaining power of the weaker sections and resolve their internal contradictions; also, we need to bear in mind the available instrumentalities to achieve this. The existing educational programme is more suited to the leisured classes for its anti-labour culture components. Hence there must be a labour component in the system of education which is

likely to make it relevant to their life situation.

Our present efforts (both Governments and NGOs) are nowhere near achieving universal education. Let us take stock of Karnataka's position to illustrate how deceptive is the present scenario.

Of the 23,514 Lower Primary Schools in the State of Karnataka (as July 20, 1985)-16,017 were Single-Teacher Schools with a total enrolment of 907,214 pupils which accounts for about 70 percent of the total enrolment in the State in the Lower Primary Schools. (Source: Educational Statistics of Karnataka, Education Department, 1985).

In contrast the State has a whopping tally of 44 engineering colleges - of them 16 in the Government and the University Sector, and the rest in the capitation fee fold, both aided and unaided - accounting for an annual intake of over 12,000 students. It is to be noted that Karnataka, having five percent of the country's total population, and nearly 20 percent of all the engineering colleges in the country. At the present level of intake in these Engineering colleges, the out-turn of engineering graduates would be at least 40 percent of the total number of such graduates coming out in the whole country every year.

Kothari (1986) in a painstaking research study asserts that with the mushrooming of higher institutions (engineering, medical and other professional courses) **the link between education, personnel requirements and social equatibility is likely to be snapped.** (emphasis ours). In the long run these institutions will pre-empt Government efforts in the field of engineering and medical education to the *'det-riment'* of all but a few.

In this connection two features of the public

policy needs closer scrutiny. In the first place, higher education is heavily subsidised by the Government. Fees charged barely cover 15 percent of the recurring costs. In medical and engineering colleges fees cover barely 10 percent of the recurring costs. Non-recurring costs are entirely covered by the Government grants and endowments. In a limited sense this feature is formulated to help lower middle and poorer sections to gain admission and access to education. In Karnataka besides high annual fees, capitation fees are also levied. The prevailing capitation fees for admission into medical colleges in the State range from Rs.40,000 to Rs.500,000 per seat!

While the Government engineering and medical colleges charge around Rs.800 as annual fees, the private engineering and medical colleges are reported to be charging anywhere between Rs.5,000 to Rs.10,000 as annual fees. Conversely, the intake into private colleges are high. This means that the merit-ordered criterion for admissions would, in course of time, be replaced by ability - to - pay - ordered criterion. This, without doubt, would jeopardise the objective of equal opportunities for education. The overall effect of these trends would be to convert education into a force for reinforcing the existing social stratifications.

Secondly, the springing up of more engineering and medical colleges would seem that the expansion is in response to demands for it. In other words, superficially, it would appear to be expanding in response to social demand. This is partially true. However, one has to bear in mind the social base from where these 'demands' originate. A quick perusal of the social base of the engineering and medical colleges in the State reveal that these institutions have sprung up due to the demands from the socially dominant groups. Even those institutions which have purportedly

come into being to help SCs and STs are not exceptions to this general trend.

Incidentally, reserving some seats in these institutions as **donor's quota** is nothing but legitimising corruption by a few individuals of the modern welfare State!

Simultaneously we need to take note of the principal challenges in rural development which are:

- a. Sustaining growth in already developed regions and extending it to other regions with favourable conditions;
- b. evolving a suitable strategy for accelerating growth and development in the undeveloped regions which have so far experienced slow growth or nil growth or even stagnations;
- c. coping successfully with the social and political tensions generated by rapid and lopsided economic growth in the past, and aim for equitable distribution of the resources and surpluses in future.

In the past our half-hearted attempts to increase the pace of development with wrong priorities has resulted in:-

- a. widening disparities among the rural milieu;
- b. increasing unemployment and underemployment in the rural areas leading to low returns among artisan classes (non-agricultural informal sectors in the villages);
- c. progressive deterioration of the physical environment and continued exploitation for urban needs.

Thus, developing suitable strategies for rural

areas, with particular reference to weaker sections, constitutes a major challenge for development planners and policy makers. Past experiences indicate that our developmental strategies must satisfy two essential conditions. **First**, they must contribute to meeting the needs for gainful employment, housing and essential amenities and services at acceptable economic and social costs affordable by the weaker sections. **Second**, they must ensure that the development of the villages contribute to national and regional growth particularly through multiple, development inducing interactions. The strategies will require advances in several directions, but principally in developing (a) a spatial pattern of development that is better adapted to the economic and social conditions of rural areas; (b) lower cost of technologies and delivery of services to weaker sections; (c) suitable political and administrative structure for management of rural systems.

Our **reflections** on the new educational policy, drought relief programmes and other non-formal education activities led us to new perceptions which culminated in our initiative of creating an atmosphere of learning - **OF LEARNING TO LEARN** - of all people in a cluster of villages within a radius of 7 to 8 kms. This cluster, we hope, will emerge as an '**educational spark**' in the area and would lead to more such clusters based on the local people's interest and participation.

It was conceived that proper education would fuel economic growth, facilitate equality of opportunity and afford social justice to the deprived; to educate has been to bring a new world and new world order out of the old. This needs to be a collective vision, and the process of education has to manage the most complex network of relationships that would cut across communities, services, authorities and levels of Govern-

ment. Consciousness and self-reliance enable people to make their own history; but they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from their past, self-confidence derived due to self-reliance; it is this positive circumstance that we attempt to provide and be facilitators for the process.

PRIMARY OBJECTIVES OF THE INITIATIVES

- a. to strive to provide universal primary education for children in the age group of 6 to 16 years in selected rural areas;
- b. to strive to improve the quality of primary school education in selected areas and to relate it more closely to the life and needs of rural children and to rural development;
- c. to produce improve educational materials for use in primary schools;
- d. to collect and devise relevant and improved pedagogical methods which are culture-social need specific;
- e. to strive to provide non-formal schools for those already dropped out of school.

SPECIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE INITIATIVE

- a. Basically our role is seen as an **interventionist**; through proper and regular interventions, it is believed that a people-oriented developmental process can be set in.
- b. It differs from earlier attempts to introduce compulsory primary education in selected areas using penal provisions; this scheme recognises the limitations of the legislations in the universalisation of primary education; it recognises that in the universalisation

of primary education local cultural-economic-social-political aspects have an important role to play.

The emphasis is on universal rather than on compulsory education; on diagnosis of cultural, economic, educational, social and political factors that impede the realisation of this goal, and on designing practical remedies to overcome them in a given concrete situation.

- c. This programme also differs in two other sectors, viz.,
 - i. it visualises very large academic inputs in order to make the non-formal and formal classes effective; which means the present on-going classes in the formal system will not be ignored - on the other hand special attention will be given to strengthen it;
 - ii. it visualises an integrated system of primary education in every location with two separate but mutually supportive and coordinated schemes (formal and non-formal).
- d. It looks at the curricular reform in a more comprehensive way; it visualises the modification of the content through the introduction of work experiences, better science education and closer links between education and environment. It will emphasise skill development and value-orientation for modernisation on the assumption that if society is to be modernised and developed and the only education which most individuals will receive is primary education, then this education must become an effective instrument of development.
- e. It visualises a better preparation of primary



Model that says it all

school teachers in terms of an all-round formation, techniques etc. Teachers will also be made aware of the social aspects of primary education and introduced to the general problems of education and national development. Teachers will learn to play a participatory role in the programme.

- f. The programme takes a **COMMUNITY APPROACH** to the problem of education, particularly that of primary education. It assumes that the local community will accept and should accept responsibility for the education of all its members as well for local development, and aims to design an organisation model which gives a practical effect to this idea.
- g. The programme views primary education as an entry point for grossroot activists to intervene for consciousness building towards development and social change. The primary education viewed herein is not an isolated formal schooling alone - it covers non-formal, formal and integrates them at all levels without any disparity.

FINALLY, THE PROGRAMME AIMS :

- to bring out a comprehensive strategy for providing universal primary education with special emphasis on children from deprived sections;
- to form a community based and decentralised model for the organisation of universal primary education;
- to facilitate for the increased participation of teachers and motivating them at all levels;
- the programme provides for wider partici-

pation of the people for discussions, problem sharing etc., and aims to lead them to the wider issues they face.

THE LIMITATIONS

We have also reflected upon the possible limitations of this initiative viz., (1) the present education system may be reinforced - that is, people will be made to understand and believe that the present education system is value-free and good; (2) at some level we may legitimise the system.

We wish to emphasise here that we have no illusions about the present educational system, models etc. At the same time, we have realised that if we fail to intervene in the formal system now, then voluntary agencies involved in non-formal education programmes may be doing **NFE** work for many more years to come with the increasing dropout rates from school - and that the nature and characteristics of the problem will not allow people to take charge of themselves - politically, socially and culturally.

Viewed in the above context, knowing the limitations of the programme, we need to play an interventionist's role now simultaneously to reduce dropout rates from formal schools and attempt to develop pedagogy which can be easily duplicated; so as to play a role of facilitators and motivators throughout.

CONTENT AND METHODOLOGY

The initiation of this **Movement** needs a heavy cultural input so that its core ideas and values are perceived and internalised by the masses leading to their realisation through constructive communication projects and programmes. For this we need to identify local communication methods,

and build up on these methods. Generally, puppetry, street plays, songs, audio-visuals, films, posters, village notice boards, slogans etc., are the one's which bring people together.

Through these media channels, we aim to create an awareness among the people on the concept of education in its broader perspective, the need and pedagogy of learning and its importance in changing their situation and bettering their lives.

It presupposes that the weaker sections are identified, groups are organised around specific issues and a continuous training of leadership is pursued.

It is hoped that the **"People's Movement for Education"** will set in motion other movements leading to greater enhancement of the people's bargaining power irrespective of the existing political systems that would try to impede this move..

This initiative also adopts a holistic approach as regards the integral development of the individual and community (the destiny of the individual is realised in community and comunitarian values, which are emphasised here), and so tries to link the Government efforts with the weakest sections, the scientific community with the masses and their needs,

Without the proper involvement of the scientific community in the Movement, it is understood that the Movement will only produce meagre results.

Serious research into the educational, socio-economic situation, health status, value-set of weaker groups, taxanomic, geological etc., has to be carried out so that people are helped

to take the right decisions for development.

Writing of contextual books, appropriate technology, transference of pedagogical methods and tools, demands competent scientific personnel and skills. Society cannot be changed unless persons from all sections are made aware of the prevailing situation and are motivated to contribute by their knowledge, skills and lifestyles to the transformation of the same.

THE PROCESS AND METHODOLOGY

Prior to deciding the content, methodology, etc., we at the Centre had researched at three levels, viz., (a) enrolment rates, attendance rates, non-attendance rates, dropout rates etc., in three clusters of 30 villages; (b) we did a content analysis of the primary school books, had lengthy discussions with primary school teachers about the problems they face, their innovations in teaching etc; (c) a simple socio-economic survey to understand the background of the area, in particular that of the school-going children.

The above process took a period of nearly 14 months.

Simultaneously, we also initiated research studies on various aspects like the identification of the cultural image of the people in the area, the nutritional studies etc. Regular reflections strengthened our belief that formal education systems cannot be ignored by those involved in non-formal education activities, and that they have to play the role of an interventionist in the formal education scene.

At the adaption level, on the basis of our initial programming, it is possible for consultation and exchange of information and materials between participating institutions and between institutions

from outside too. While we aim that each village/school has to decide its own approach, certain common strategic guidelines will be followed.

This is Due to the Fact that :

- a. The schools in rural areas are not well equipped for education, specially in mathematics and science subjects; and consequently more use has to be made of out-of-school activities using local facilities and environment.
- b. The temptation to divide city schools and rural schools will be high, and on this basis offer only a limited science education. In our opinion this has to be resisted; however, local conditions are to be taken into consideration prior to deciding the curriculum.
- c. The teaching materials and methods need to be simple, low-cost and activity-based, and should allow maximum participation of the learners.
- d. Steps are to be taken to ensure the full participation of rural school teachers, parents and community institutions in the process of education.

We have also identified general guidelines for preparing instructional tools and selecting pedagogic models, which can be briefly explained as follows :

- a. the programme has to be planned and implemented within the specific socio-economic-cultural realities;
- b. it is important to discourage a generation gap in scientific information wherever possi-

ble. Instructional materials offering scope for the application of science knowledge should be planned for the family as a whole, especially in relation to topics such as food, nutrition, health, water, agriculture etc.

- c. the educational process, as visualised by us, aims to explain things done at home or outside against a scientific background, and not to introduce science and technology that will alienate them from their immediate environment and lifestyle.

In line with the above, the proposed-developing curriculum emphasises on local problems associated with agriculture, irrigation, home remedies etc. Curriculum and instructional materials are designed to inculcate scientific methods and thinking as well as to develop related skills. Acquisition of scientific information is of less importance in the programme than a scientific approach to problem solving.

We aim to use science education and tools to teach the pupil to observe accurately, reason logically and avoid both metaphysical interpretations of nature and mystification of science and technology. Hence our science education and vocational schools will not aim to produce technologists or technicians but people with scientific minds.

If the initiative has to sustain and yield fruits then it has to be concretised by definite time-bound programmes. Hence a few targets are fixed for the areas where we have introduced this initiative:-

- adult literacy to be achieved in a year's time;
- children of pre-school age to be in pre-schools (Ata Shala or Balwadis) within six months time;

- all children of age-group 6-14 years are to be enrolled in primary schools and those hindered due to poverty or for any other reasons, to be motivated to attend **NFE** classes;
- higher primary schools or high schools to be initiated with the people where they do not exist; where they exist, a vocational school to be initiated based on local conditions;
- concrete steps to be taken together with the people to improve the infrastructure of primary schools;
- the Government's economic programmes are studied and people helped to take advantage of them.

The above targets are not exhaustive but only inclusive. It is hoped that if the thrust of the programmes are towards universalisation and qualitative improvement of primary education then within a few years' time, people educated in not only 3 R's, but also who can read the world around them, having acquired the necessary social and technical skills will be able to strengthen the Movement of learning and transform their lives and environment.

PRESENT STATUS OF OUR INITIATIVES

We are doing preliminary work in 12 Clusters of villages in 12 areas of Karnataka with each Cluster comprising of 9 to 15 villages. In two of the Clusters, the initial efforts have reached the take-off stage. In one of the clusters we have entered into partnership with a recently started High School by Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes; and are working towards making it a model High School with ideal transformation and a vocational training Centre.

The students of the school are being trained

in media skills (street plays, puppetry) to carry the message of learning to their villages. In fact, we aim to make every person in the Cluster to be both a teacher and a learner; to be creative and articulate their problems, needs and aspirations and goals through different forms of expression and relate themselves fruitfully with their environment through action-oriented involvement. Thus, the school becomes part of their own institutions - not an institution or building owned by the Government!

We have already motivated teams of people to evolve new pedagogic models, educational tools etc. The areas covered now are language teaching, science and mathematics. We aim to produce models which will follow communicational methods. The ethnographic sectors will be the key to our functioning i.e., understanding insider knowledge and developing on this.

In those areas where we have initiated the work regular meetings are held between primary school teachers and parents. The participation of the parents in all activities is ensured. It is hoped that this initiative will have a diffusion effect in clusters of village touching the targeted clusters and inspire other voluntary agencies and individuals to involve themselves in a meaningful way in spreading the idea.

We believe that initiatives of this nature will enable children from weaker sections to raise their voice in a world that is mostly being built against them.

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